



## Donna Jean McDowell

May 20, 1945 - February 27, 2025

Our beloved Donna Jean McDowell went home to be with her Heavenly Father February 27, 2025 at the age of 79. Donna truly loved the Lord and lived her entire life striving to put Him first and to sharing His love with others.

She was a devoted wife to the love of her life, Gary, her husband of 58 years, and followed him wherever his job took them all over the country. Donna was a loving mother to her three children and to many foster children, and beloved grandmother to her six grandchildren. She was the biggest fan and supporter of all her children and grandchildren and loved to share how proud she was of them all. She loved to go to as many of their activities as she could, but most importantly she shared the gospel and her love for Jesus with all of them.

Donna was an educator for close to 50 yrs and had a special place in her heart for her special education students and was not afraid to advocate and fight for them. She not only opened her home to many foster children over the years, but also to several students and missionaries that needed a home.

Donna was always active in church, teaching Sunday school, Bible school, or serving wherever there was a need and was an active member of Cape Bible Church. In addition to the gift of teaching, Donna was blessed with many other talents and always used her talents for the Lord. Donna was an amazing artist and not only did artwork for family, church, school & community projects, but

she also travelled to many churches and organizations sharing the gospel through art & music with her husband. She was a very talented seamstress and was always making or fixing clothing and items for others, including her students and the local hospital and rehab.

Donna truly was a reflection of the Lord's love to those around her and her love & generosity knew no bounds. Those of us that were privileged enough to call her wife, mother, Grams, Mops, and friend, were extremely blessed to have had her in our lives and her legacy of love will live on forever. She is now reaping her rewards in heaven and although we miss her greatly we know that we will see her soon and "Oh what a glorious day that will be".

Donna is survived by her husband Gary McDowell also of Cape Girardeau, her son Barry McDowell and wife Patricia of Haymarket, Virginia, her daughter Becky Rush and husband Kelly of Batesville, Arkansas, and her daughter Beth Johnson and husband Marcus of Cape Girardeau, Missouri. She is also survived by her six grandchildren; CJ McDowell, Christopher McDowell, Taylor Rush, Tyas Rush, Ava Johnson, and Marshall Johnson.

Donna was preceded in death by her parents Rowena Mertens, and Bill Mertens of Raytown, Missouri & her uncle LeRoy Bromley of Springfield, MO.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your you mind."

Matthew 22:37

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another"

John 13:35

A Celebration of Life for Donna will be held Saturday March 8, 2025, at 2:00 pm Cape Bible Church, Cape Girardeau, MO

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations in Donna's name be made to Safe House of Southeast Missouri - 2350 Independence St., Cape Girardeau, MO 63703, or VIP Industries - 1330 Southern Expy, Cape Girardeau, MO 63703.

Online condolences may be made at [www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com](http://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com).

Ford & Sons Funeral Home - Mt. Auburn is in charge of arrangements.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

MAR 8. 2:00 PM (CT)

Cape Bible Chapel  
2911 Kage Road  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

# Tribute Wall

DC

“ I worked with Donna for two years at CHS and she was always so positive, helpful and kind. She was extremely dedicated to her students and impacted them greatly. I send my sincere condolences to her family, may God comfort them with their beautiful memories.  
Dixie Crites

Dixie Crites - March 09, 2025 at 05:23 PM

SW

“ Donna was such a dedicated teacher. I worked with her for many years as an aide with the Special Needs hall. She encouraged every student to be the best they could be whether she was teaching math, art or sewing. Donna was one of those rare gems that will be missed by many.

Shari Witty - March 07, 2025 at 07:30 PM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donna Jean McDowell.



March 06, 2025 at 02:48 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Donna Jean McDowell.

March 06, 2025 at 02:48 PM

MS

“ Barry is both my colleague and friend. He always speaks well of his mother and what a force of good she was in his life. I believe it is important to honor our parents by becoming people who are known for our love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control. Barry demonstrates these traits and honors his mother whom, I am sure, provided him the example he needed when he was a lad reared in Missouri.

*Barry, I am truly sorry for your loss. Remember, there is joy in knowing the Savior intercedes to help you carry the burden of living with your mother who has fallen asleep in the Lord. Remember, the Holy Spirit will comfort you through every step of the new normal. Remember, you are precious and loved by your colleague and friend. Michael J. Schmiede*

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**Michael Schmiede** - March 06, 2025 at 10:16 AM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Donna Jean McDowell.



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March 06, 2025 at 09:55 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Donna Jean McDowell.

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March 06, 2025 at 09:55 AM

BE

“ Gary I'm so very sorry for your loss. Your love shined thru during our many conversations at the book store- so many memories made together and with your family. I have no doubt that her many caring acts over the years thru teaching and other will be felt for years to come by so many people.



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**Becky** - March 05, 2025 at 09:50 PM

KR

“ Donna was a faithful and loving friend. There was an elderly gentleman at our home church who often shared with us the refrain from the poem,  
*Only One Life... Only one life, twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.* This was Donna's heart. I thank the Lord for the gift of her friendship. Loving sympathy to Gary and family.

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**Karen Rex** - March 05, 2025 at 04:38 PM

NB

“ Donna and I were teaching partners for many years. She taught math and I taught English to our shared students. She was dedicated to the students and had a deep abiding faith in God. I enjoyed working with her and spending time with her. She was a very special person.

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**Nancy Berry** - March 04, 2025 at 09:35 PM